

Y Tennis

By Dave Eitland

Y Director of Marketing and Development

The Grand Traverse Bay YMCA offers tennis programs for any age and any skill level with lessons, league play, open court time, and contract court time. Their experienced staff of tennis professionals make the Y Tennis experience unique in the region.

Just ask 90+ year old Wally Bruder, who plays three times a week as part of the YMCA's "contract time" option. Or ask 10 year old triplets Faith, Hope, and Grace Kurtz, who take group lessons Saturday mornings. Ask Barb Polzin, USTA Adult League player and an admitted tennis-addict, or ask any of the 80 boys who will play in the YMCA Junior High League this fall, for many their first experience with tennis. Ask the players on the tennis teams from St. Francis, West, Central, or TC Christian, or ask Joyce Weise, whose knee operation hasn't keep her off the courts. Ask Paul and Barb Bandrowski. They can be found at the Y courts most any day with their five kids who all play tennis alongside them, including the youngest, Elliott, currently ranked #6 in the Midwest Tennis Association. You can also find C.J. Shoultz, ranked #5 in the Midwest.

"YMCA tennis really is for everyone," exclaims Janet "Jandy" Cooley whose daughter Paige has played tennis since she was three, and is currently a top ranked 14 and under tournament competitor.

They'll all tell you the same thing – "YMCA tennis is a great way to learn the game, get a great workout, or just have a lot of fun!"

One of the reasons for the success of the YMCA tennis program is that commitment to excellence goes hand in hand with commitment to mission. Tennis pros Tom, Joseph, and James Van Deinse and Andy Caldwell have all played international satellite level tour qualifiers, and as past winner of the Northern Michigan Tennis Association Sportsmanship Award, Coach Joseph tells the parents of his students, "Not every kid will grow up to be a top ranked player, but every kid can learn to have fun, and every kid can be taught the YMCA values of honesty, respect, caring and responsibility. We do that in our tennis program just like we do in each of our programs."

"Nearly 40% of our current YMCA membership is related to tennis," explains YMCA CEO Tom Van Deinse. "Y Tennis is our biggest and most cost-effective program."

Whether it is individual or group lessons, indoor or outdoor, for fun or ranked competition, contract time or free time to members, Y Tennis provides the means for people of all ages to play and be fit.

This fall is no exception. Beginning on September 19 a grade 6 to 8 Boys league will begin. Individual schools have the option of forming teams by school.

Group and individual lessons in divisions 3 - 5 years, grades K - 3, grades 4 - 6, junior high and high school, an all the way up to adult to Adult Cardio Tennis Classes begin September 12. Every age and skill level can find a place in the Y Tennis Program.

Tennis Contract Time allows individuals and groups to reserve their courts in 17 week blocks to play both this fall and winter. Contact Barb Beckett for availability of courts. Contract time begins September 6.

For more information about Y Tennis or other YMCA programs, log on to www.gtbayymca.org, or contact the Front Desk at our main Y facility at 933-9622 or info@gtbayymca.org.